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Follow-up to the Fourth World Conference on Women and to the twenty-third special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including caregiving in the context of HIV/AIDS

Statement submitted by International Federation of Women in Legal Careers, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 36 and 37 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

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Statement*

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** has analysed the priority theme of the fifty-third session of the Commission on the Status of Women – "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century": implementation of strategic objectives and action in critical areas of concern and further actions and initiatives: the equal sharing of responsibilities between women and men, including care giving in the context of HIV/AIDS - and considers that the world we live in today is worn out by numerous conflicts and wars, those being the result of the inequalities of wealth division and the exploitation of the world's natural resources.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** considers that wars have an especially grave impact on women, since they undermine our social, economic and political position and increase the discrimination to which we, the women, are already subject.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** believes that in order to obtain Peace, one must prepare it, and in order to do so, it is indispensable to promote Sustainable Development and to recognize Equality as a fundamental human right.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** thinks that the lasting recognition of Women's Human Rights, the guarantee of gender equality, and the elimination of all discrimination against women is the way to a Sustainable and equitable Development of the planet, which will make Peace possible.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** takes for granted that the growing recognition of Women's Human Rights by the international community, and the presence of women in areas traditionally reserved to men, has changed the power equation, especially concerning the role of women in situations of conflict, as well as in their resolution. The nature of those conflicts has also changed, it has assumed now a gender dimension and an inclusive approach, which comprises a gender component, is needed in order to achieve their resolution.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** judges that it must be the obligation and responsibility of all negotiators, mediators and facilitators in the peace processes to effectively apply Resolution nº1325 of the United Nations Security Council, so as to encourage the parties in conflict, to create facilities for the formal participation of women in the Peace process, and it is required that the above have on their teams experts on gender, as well as an adequate technical capacity to guarantee that the negotiation on such critical matters as Constitution, power sharing, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration in civil society take into consideration, those matters that specifically affect women.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** consequently considers that being the peaces processes an opportunity for a redefinition of the political, economic, social and civil structures of societies after a conflict, those should be utilized to guarantee the equality of

* Issued without formal editing.

participation of men and women in the enjoyment and exercise of their Human Rights. And that the United Nations should engage to nominate a greater number of women to its high positions and especially to those relating to the building and maintenance of Peace. Furthermore, Governments should elaborate, approve and apply national action plans for the implementation of Resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** thinks that the increase of economic and social inequality, both between and inside the countries, obstructs the development of Human Rights and generates new social conflicts. Poverty affects millions of Women, making impossible their personal autonomy, and increasing their vulnerability and risk of suffering all kinds of violence: from domestic and family abuse to sexual and labour exploitation.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** wants to emphasize its conviction that the present day economic and financial system, in particular in this moment of deep crisis, injures gravely Human Rights - notably the economic and social rights - of the poorest, strongly affecting women.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** therefore thinks that within the mandate of the International Criminal Court should be criminalised certain acts of an economic or financial nature, whose aims and effects directly and necessarily impact gravely economic and social fundamental rights.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** considers that it is necessary the elaboration of integral laws on the status of women, so as to facilitate the knowledge of egalitarian and anti-discriminatory legislation, as well as its widespread dissemination and its effective application by the Tribunals. As well as that the National Accounting systems of each country must take into consideration the wealth produced by the non-remunerated work of women.

The **International Federation of Women in Legal Careers** believes that abortion without proper security is a humanitarian disaster, increased through its criminalisation, which is a clear violation of the Women's Human Rights, and it does not necessarily diminish its frequency; on the contrary, it forces women to pay with their life an interruption of an unwanted pregnancy. And, consequently, advocates for free access to reproductive health services, including to the "morning after" pills and to safe abortion, as a guarantee of Women's Human Rights, Liberty and Justice, as well as for the criminalisation of the deliberate spreading of the HIV/AIDS virus.